

CONTRIBUTIONS of Newa American Dabu to Nepal Bhasa Literature

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The history of Nepal Bhasa is very old. The available Nepal Bhasa literature dates back to A.D. 1505 (N.S. 625). And even the literature written in the older dialects of Nepal Bhasa available mostly in the manuscripts dated between A.D. 1360 – 1900. Hence, the graduate students of Nepal Bhasa should further study its historicity.

To date thousands of books on various genres have been published. Hence, Nepal Bhasa has its own developed literature. There is a lot of evidence the writings by the royal, rich and the pauper writers of Nepal Bhasa, which is available at Āśā Archive. It is one of the oldest written Tibeto-Burman languages according to the documents written in classical Nepal Bhasa since the 12th century. Now in the 21st century the Nepal Bhasa writings and publications are confined not only to Nepal but also foreign countries where the Newars are residing. Established in 2010 in Chicago, Newa American Dabu is one of the leading organizations in promoting the Nepal Bhasa literature through publication of *Chicago Newa*. It was registered as a non-profit organization in Illinois, U.S.A. Newa American Dabu organized the first celebration of Nepal Sambat New Year 1132 in 2010. The imminent Nepal Bhasa literati – Satya Mohan Joshi, Durga Lal Shrestha, Padma Ratna Tuladhar and Shashikala Manandhar sent congratulatory messages Newa American Dabu for promoting and preserving the Nepal Bhasa literature in Chicago.

The following are the programs Newa American Debu organized so far in order to promote the Nepal Bhasa literature.

The 106th Birthday of Chittadhar 'Hridaya'

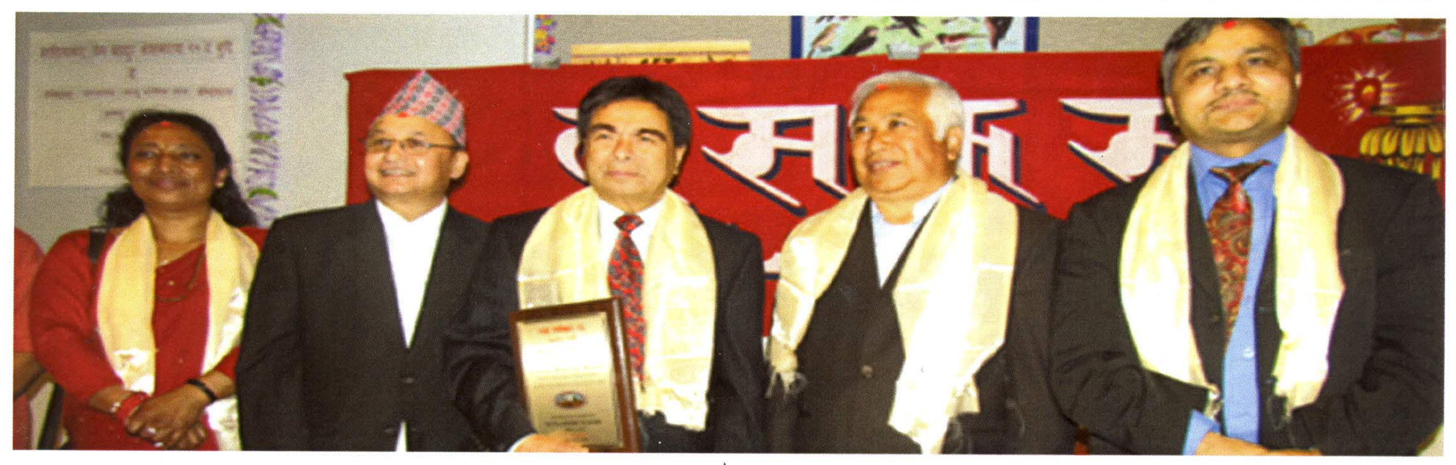
Perhaps this must be the first of its kind celebrate the birthday of Nepal Bhasa literati abroad. On 2nd June 2012 the 106th Birthday of Kavi Keshari Chittadhar 'Hridaya' was celebrated at ChicagoPublic Library. The chief guest was Nabin Chitrakar, Member-Secretary of Nepal Bhasa Parishad. The letter of appreciation was conferred on him for his contributions to Nepal Bhasa literature. He delivered a talk on "Chittadhar Hridaya: Yesterday and Today", which highlighted works of Chittadhar in comparison with those of John Milton, Walt Whitman and Maya Angelou and so on.



The 96th Birthday of Prem Bahadur Kansakar

The founder of Āśā Archive, the late Prem Bahadur Kansakar's 96th birthday was observed on 2 June 2013 at Chicago Public Library. At the program Prof. Manik Lal Shrestha, a noted critic of Nepal Bhasa literature, was Chief Guest, and Dr. Bal Gopal Shrestha and his spouse, Shreelaxmi Shrestha, a short-story writer from the Netherlands were guests of honor. This event turned into a literary event. Prof. Manik Lal Shrestha was honored, and he spoke about the significant contributions to Nepal Bhasa the late Prem Bahadur made. He went on to say that Prem Bahadur was influenced by the Iranian and Persian romantic poets of Iran and Persia. He also recited a romantic poem by Prem Bahadur and concluded that he was indeed a romantic poet. Dr. Bal Gopal Shrestha highlighted works of Prem Bahadur and Shreelaxmi Shrestha recited a poem, "Supāe" (Cloud).





Publication of *Chicago Newa*

Chicago Newa, the flagship of Newa American Dabu, is an annual literary publication. Since Nepal Sambat 1132 (A.D. 2011) *Chicago Newa* has been regularly coming out. It publishes writings of Nepal Bhasa writers as well as foreign writers both in Nepal Bhasa and English including the activities of Newa American Dabu.

Table 1: Writings published in *Chicago Newa,* Vol. 1 to 6

Volume	Writings in Nepal Bhasa	Writings in English	Total
1	14	9	23
2	20	15	35
3	24	19	43
4	31	16	47
5	22	21	43
6	19	15	34
Total	**130**	**95**	**225**

Above Table 1 shows the writings published in *Chicago Newa* from Vol. 1 to 6 both in Nepal Bhasa and English. One hundred and thirty writings are published in Nepal Bhasa while ninty-five writings are published in English out of the total of two hundred and twenty-five.

Table 2: Variety of writings in Nepal Bhasa only published in *Chicago Newa*: Vol. 1 to 6

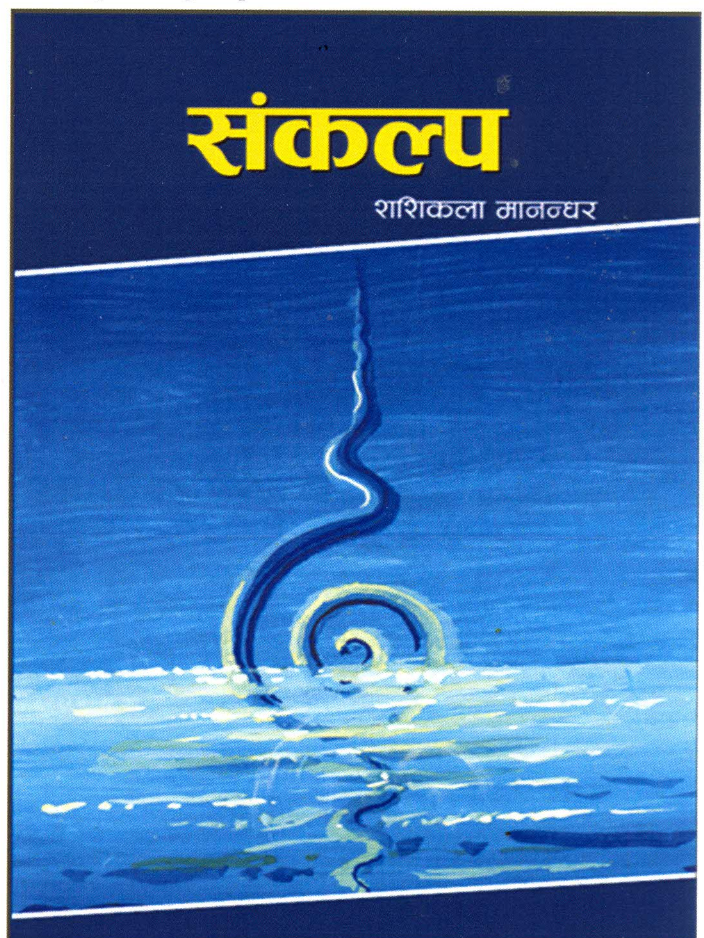
Volume	Story	Poetry	Article	Comics	Play	Total
1	8	3	3			14
2	5	10	4		1	20
3	4	8	10	2		24
4	6	11	14			31
5	10	5	7			22
6	3	2	14			19
Total	**36**	**39**	**52**	**2**	**1**	**130**

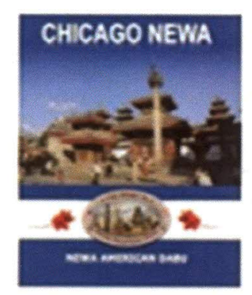
Above Table 2 presents a variety of writings such as story, poetry, article, comics and play in Nepal Bhasa only published in *Chicago Newa*: Vol. 1 to 6 are one hundred and thirty.

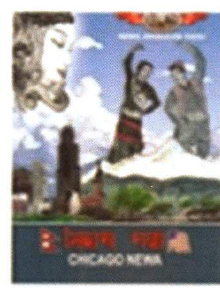
Financial Support to Publication of Nepal Bhasa Literature and Literary Activities

One of the objectives of Newa American Dabu is to publish the Nepal Bhasa literature. To accomplish this objective, since last year it published a novel, *Sankalpa*, by Shashikala Manandhar. This novel won the Prem-Mohan Sirapā in Nepal Sambat (A.D. 2016). It was a matter of happiness for the publisher, Newa American Dabu.

In order to support and enhance Nepal Bhasa literary programs occasionally organized by Nepal Bhasa Parishad, Newa American Dabu managed to provide a financial support to organize the programs like Raja Shakya's presentation of his short-stories and

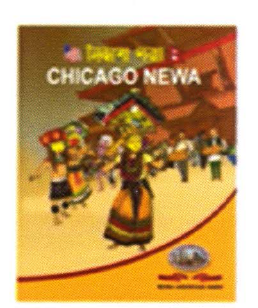












interaction; Pratishara Sayami's presentation of her poems and interaction; and Lochan Tara Tuladhar's presentation of her short-stories and interaction. It was a matter of pride for Newa American Dabu to make these programs successful through its financial support provided to Nabin Chitrakar, the coordinator of these programs.

Newa American Dabu is also concerned about the financial constraints of medical expenses the Nepal *Bhasa* writers have to face. It is worth mentioning that it has been supporting those who need medical expenses for medical treatment.

It is a matter of great pleasure for Newa American Dabu that has over 500 members in Chicago to promote Nepal Bhasa literature. It is committed to uplifting and strengthening the literature.

Publication and Distribution of *Chicago Newa*

The preparation for publication – such as collection of articles and editing – is done in Chicago. It is printed in Nepal. Half of copies of *Chicago Newa* go to Chicago and the rest are distributed in Kathmandu. A prominent Newa in Chicago launches a new edition at the program of New Year of Nepal Sambat.

The digital copy of all issues of *Chicago Newa* is available at www.scribd.com and it can also be downloaded.

*(This article was originally written in Nepal Bhasa and translated into English by **Professor Nirmal Man Tuladhar.**)*